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ABSTRACT

The booklet summarizes finding involving over 6,300 youth in the New York State Program for Institutionalized Neglected and Delinquent Children. Four state agencies (the Education Department, the Division for Youth, the Department of Correctional Services, and the Office of Drug Abuse Services) are explained to have contributed data on norm-referenced and criterion-referenced outcomes in reading and math achievement. Data is said to indicate that the cooperatively developed programs were worthwhile cognitive learning experiences for the majority of the youth involved. (CL)

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PROGRAMS FOR NEGLECTED AND DELINQUENT CHILDREN

ESEA Title I
P.L. 89-750
1976

The University of the State of New York
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Bureau of School and Categorical Programs Evaluation
Albany, New York 12234

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Acknowledgments

The 1976 ESEA, Title I Program for Neglected and Delinquent pupils was a joint venture. Projects implemented in the Department of Correctional Services (DCS), Division for Youth (DFY) and the Office of Drug Abuse Services (ODAS) were developed by the agencies and approved by the State Education Department (SED). The findings included in this publication could not have been reported without the assistance of Lynn Gilmore (DCS), James Lucey (DFY) or Cynthia Bell (ODAS). Leo Denault (SED) under the supervision of John House (SED) managed the application review procedure and monitoring processes required for successful treatment installation.

Eileen Kelly, Robert Miller, and George Cronk, Jr. under the supervision of Leo Doherty acquired, refined, and aggregated the achievement data in the Bureau of School and Categorical Programs Evaluation, Division of Research.

The cooperation among several agencies was manifested in observable educational achievement for this extremely disadvantaged and often incarcerated population. The findings reveal that educational services with positive outcomes can be delivered effectively through interagency coordination.

The Population

The New York State program for Institutionalized Neglected and Delinquent Children, funded under the Amendment P.L. 89-750 to ESEA 1965, P.L. 89-10, served children in a variety of institutions. Some were in local institutions and either attended local schools or schools upon the grounds of their institutions; others were in State-operated facilities and attended remedial projects in these facilities. The State institutions included those run by the Division for Youth, the Department of Correctional Services and the Office of Drug Abuse Services.

Brief descriptions of the State Agencies which played a role in providing education follow:

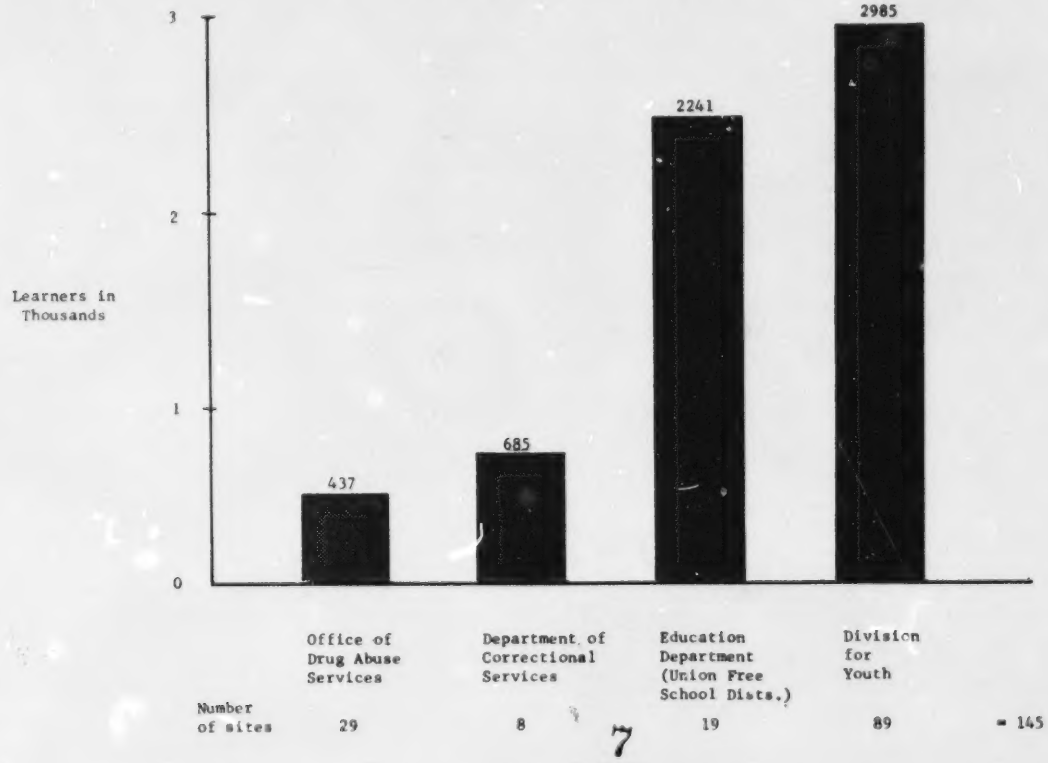
The Education Department: Education in New York State is the responsibility of a single department under the legislative direction of the Board of Regents, and the executive direction of the Commissioner of Education, who is also President of The University.

The Division for Youth: Maintains minimum security facilities consisting of conservation camps for the care, treatment, education and rehabilitation of males 16 to 25 years of age.

The Department of Correctional Services: The Department has the management and control of a reception center for males between age 16 to 21 years and certain 15 year olds who have committed specified serious crimes of violence; and four correctional youth camps.

The Office Of Drug Abuse Services: Authorized to promote, develop, establish, coordinate and conduct unified programs for the education, prevention, diagnosis, treatment aftercare and control in the field of drug abuse and to cooperate with and enter into agreements with other public agencies to attain these objectives.

A Distribution of New York State's Neglected and Delinquent Project Learners by State Agency



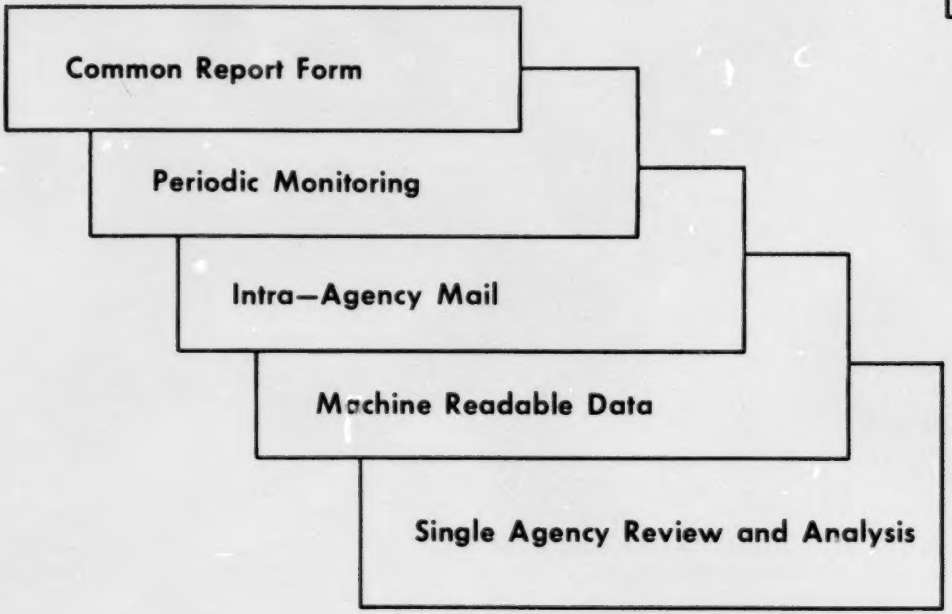
Educational Data Acquisition

It is said that people who pay the bill for services have the right to inquire about the details of the need, the services rendered and the potential value to be derived from rendering the service. In the field of education, such questions are not always easy to answer. With neglected and delinquent children, the questions are often more difficult because motivational influences on the part of the learner may be at a low ebb or completely lacking. For some reason, society seems to be turning its back on such children on the one hand, and then at a subsequent point, seems to be offering a new plan of life to the participants.

Most educators believe that any plan of rehabilitation must contain a program which brings about increments in the cognitive domain. It is hoped that these young people will have a longer life ahead of them than they have already lived. Thus, it is often argued that a contributing member of society is one who is better able to find his/her niche in life. Hence, it is important for all members of society, who can do so, to acquire some competence in the basic skills areas.

Staff of the Education Department worked with staff of the other State agencies to devise projects which were believed to have high potential for educational success. Such projects were supplemental to the larger rehabilitation process. Tests in appropriate academic areas were administered to the participants as soon as feasible. Agreed-upon, teaching-learning experiences were offered, and at a subsequent point, additional tests were administered to assist in ascertaining to what extent the experiences were successful. The State Education Department devised a series of forms which were intended to make the reporting of appropriate data a relatively simple task for the agencies. As a result of the combined staff efforts of all appropriate State agencies, this summary report will provide clues for determining the effectiveness of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title I expenditures in New York State in the academic year ending in 1976 for young people in programs for neglected and delinquent children.

DATA ACQUISITION



The outcome data may be considered rather conservative when it is understood that:

A. Only data for participants having at least two data collection points were used. Hence, participant outcomes for which either the pretest or the posttest scores were missing have not been included.

B. If a sample of a larger population met all of the requirements, the data were not used for the entire larger population, rather only the sample data were used.

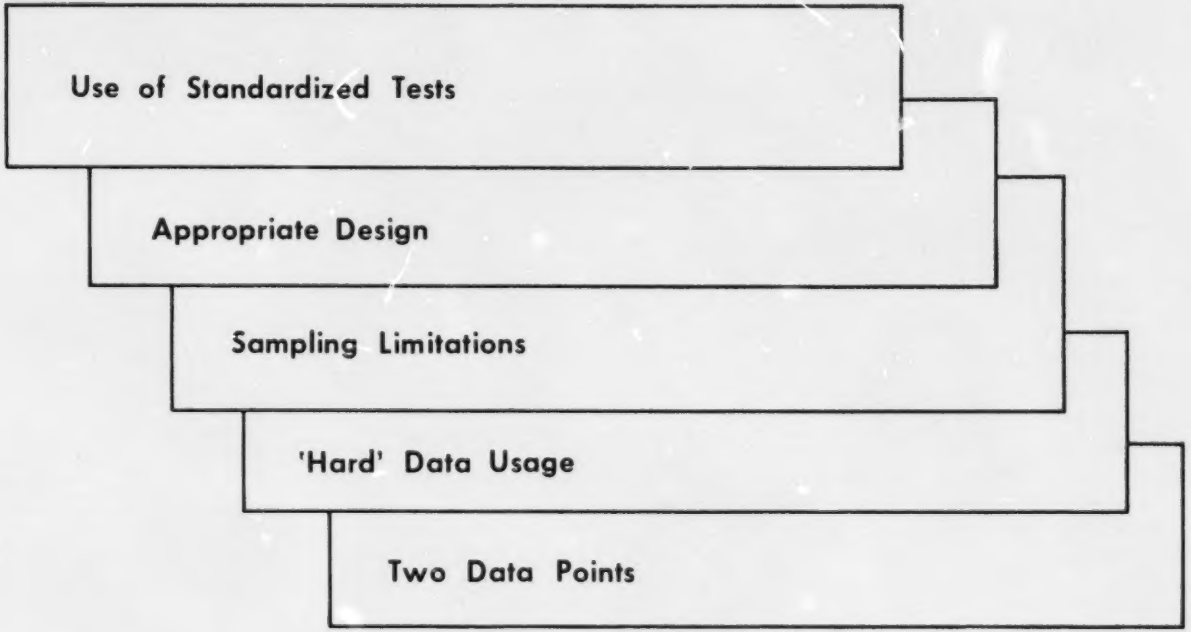
C. In cases where unresolved statistical problems arose, such questionable data were not included in the report.

D. Only scores from tests which had met the minimum standards of reliability and validity were used.

E. Some statistical procedures may in combination tend to improve results. However, a review of the procedures employed for making such inferences was completed by external professional staff, and it was concluded that even if all of the procedures combined in a positive fashion they could not account for the progress made by the average participant.

F. Some newer teaching techniques may have had the appearance of being potentially more powerful, but it was felt that experimentation nationally and in New York should be kept to a minimum with this group. Thus, only tried and tested techniques were used. Said another way, only those techniques were used which had withstood the test of time and been found to be relatively successful.

Criteria For Making Judgments



Reading Achievement

The average student in a public school is expected to achieve one month's educational growth for each month of school in a given grade. Upon the conclusion of the tenth month, it is expected that such a student will advance to the next grade.

Tests are divided into two or more large groups, those which yield clues indicating where a learner scored relative to the rest of the population and those indicating simply the learner's mastery of a given skill. Both types of tests were used in this program.

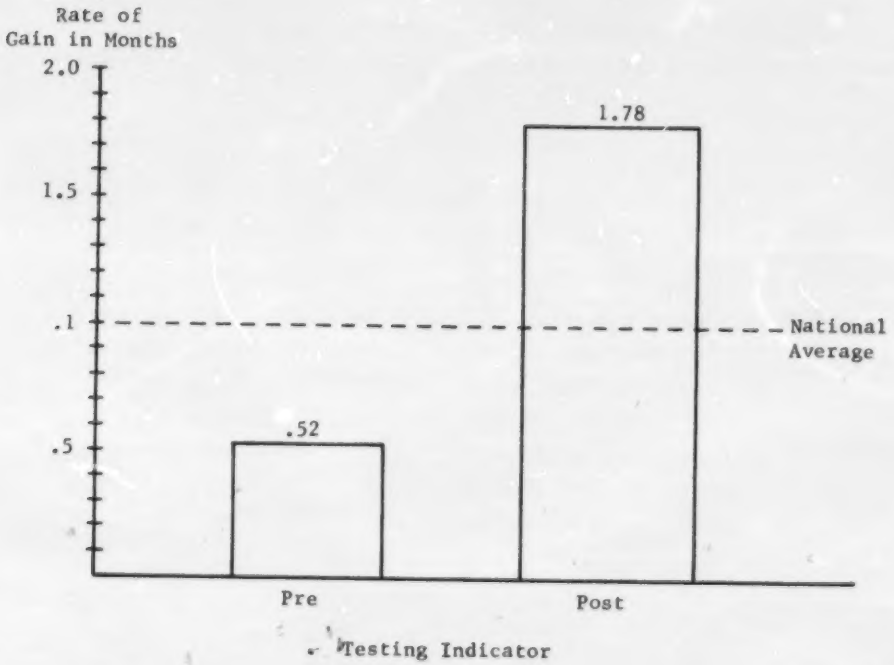
Norm-referenced outcomes were derived for over 2,200 participants from all agencies. This represented 73 percent of the participants in the program, but data included only those learners for whom at least the two test scores mentioned earlier were available.

These participants were distributed among grades one through twelve and were given specialized programs which lasted anywhere from two to ten months. All of the data were converted to a monthly rate.

From the chart, it may be seen that the groups had a pretreatment average of about one-half of a month for each month of schooling. Thus, with the passage of each year, such learners without supplemental education would fall further behind the national average.

The posttest results are shown in the right-hand column of the chart. All of the group averages (1.78 months) exceeded the averages for the national group, which is one month gain for one month of exposure.

A Comparison of Rates of Gains
For All Neglected and Delinquent Participants
In Reading



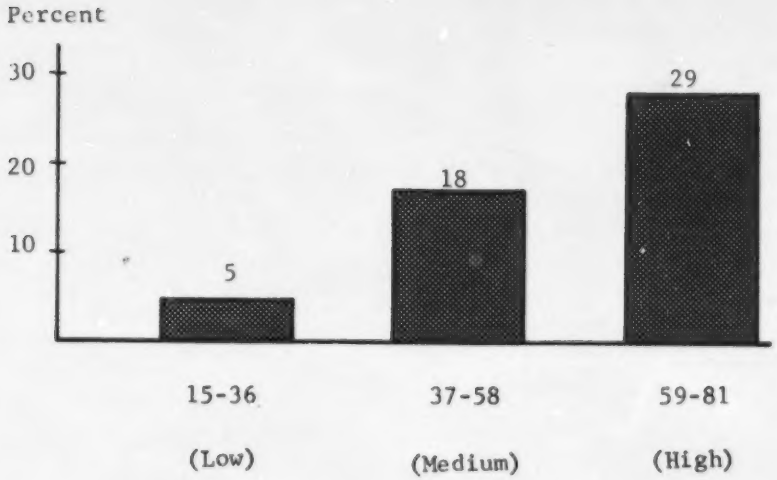
Reading Achievement

Criterion-referenced outcomes. Nearly 17,000 participants[1/] were pretested in connection with one or more skill areas. Over 10,000, or nearly 60 percent, of these participants were posttested. About 3,500, or 52 percent of those who took the posttest, demonstrated mastery of one or more skill areas. The range of group mastery was between 15 and 81 percent of the areas attempted. Said another way, one of the many reading skill areas was "Study Skills" which was undertaken by only 20 participants at the grade 4 through 6 level. Only 15 percent of the group mastered the skill. Conversely over 1,200 participants, at the same grade level, attempted the skill area entitled "Phonetic Analysis" and 81 percent of them demonstrated mastery on the posttest.

The accompanying chart attempts to weight such varied results by ascertaining the actual number of participants who fell into one of three categories of group criterion skill mastery. From the chart it may be inferred that of the 52 percent who were posttested, the largest single group were those who constituted a high level (59 to 81 percent) of group mastery.

1/ Duplicated count, since each participant is counted each time she/he attempts to master a skill area.

A Comparison of Range of Mastery in Reading
As Measured by a Criterion-Referenced Test



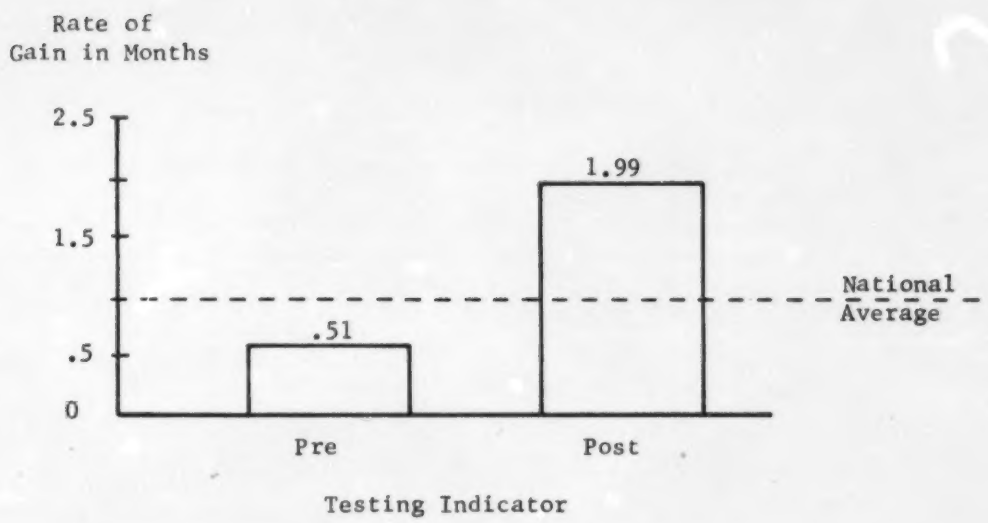
Percent of group demonstrating
mastery of a skill at posttest

Mathematics Achievement

The ability to execute certain mathematical computations is believed to be a necessary basic skill. Illustrations of the skill might include a range of activities from counting change to the ability to ascertain the length of the third side or a triangle when two sides or some combination of angles is known, as might be used in connection with land ownership.

Norm-Referenced outcomes. Over 2,600 participants were given supplemental education. Of these, about 2,000 were administered both a pre- and posttest. While the specialized experiences lasted from two to ten months, they were converted to a unit of one month. Thus, from the chart, it may be seen that the average participant was gaining at the rate of one-half month (.5) for each month of schooling prior to the supplemental education. Similarly, upon the conclusion of the specialized education, the average student was gaining at the rate of nearly two months (1.99) for each month of schooling.

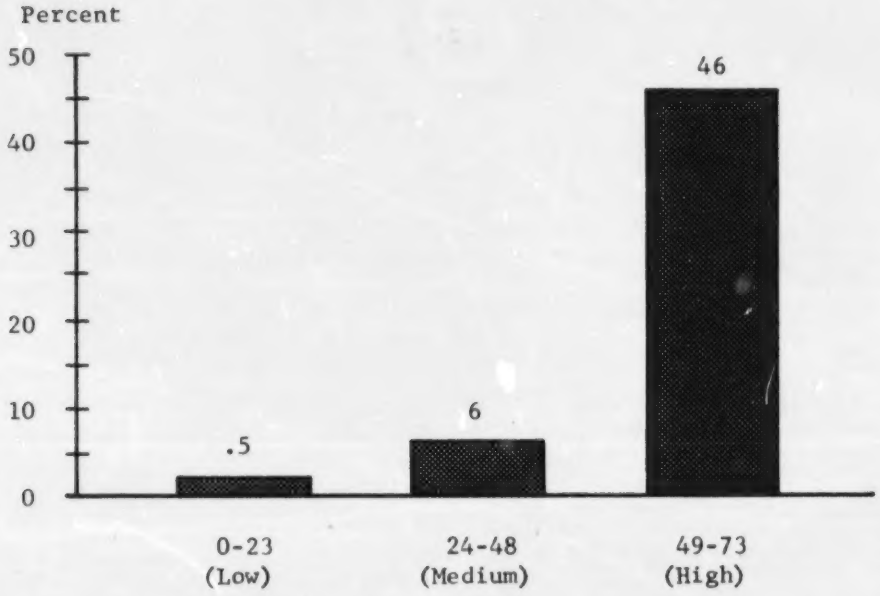
A Comparison of Rates of Gain
for all Neglected and Delinquent Participants
in Mathematics



Mathematics Achievement

Criterion referenced outcomes. Over 15,000 participants were given a pretest. Of these, about 8,800, or 58 percent, remained in a program long enough to be administered a posttest. Of the latter, over 4,600, or 53 percent, demonstrated mastery of one or more skills under study. The posttest group was further broken down into a range from those who did no better on the posttest to those skill areas wherein about 73 percent of the entire group mastered the skill(s) under study. From the chart, it can be seen that less than one percent (.5 percent) of the posttest group made little progress. Conversely, about 46 percent (of the 53 percent who took the posttest) mastered about one-half (49 percent) to about three-fourths (73 percent) of all the skill areas under study.

.. Comparison of Range of Mastery in Mathematics
As Measured by a Criterion-Referenced Test



Percent of Group Demonstrating
Mastery of a Skill Area at Posttest

Conclusion

Four State agencies with varying responsibilities to young people who had offended society in some way or who were relocated as a result of unusual family arrangements cooperated on a common goal of rehabilitation. Broadly stated, that goal sought to reduce the educational gap that existed between neglected and delinquent youth and their more advantaged peers.

Rehabilitation programs have many facets, some of which depend upon the use of reception centers to determine learner need and the development of learning experiences with the potential to fill such needs. Some programs are of very short duration. The accummulation of data in the cognitive domain does not always have the highest priority. However, the four intra-State agencies did agree to compile data which might tend to answer a broad question: "How is the State progressing in the cognitive rehabilitation of a selected group of youthful offenders?"

Data from about 145 sites for over 6,300 youth were collected and converted into participant data. Thus, the number of participants may exceed the actual number of cases since if all actual youth were involved in more than one activitiy (such as reading and mathematics) each learner would be counted at least once in each activity. Additionally, the replacement factor (offenders who are confined for very short periods are replaced by others but the actual resident head count is not increased) is about 15 percent.

All of the cautions above notwithstanding, pre- and posttest data were obtained for over 50 percent of the activity participants. From such data it may be inferred that the cooperatively developed programs were worthwhile cognitive learning experiences for the majority of the youth involved.